(ii) The penalty laid down in the said Act for giving dowry may be reduced to imprisonment of not less than one year and fine of not less than Rs. 15,000/- unless the person can prove that he was compelled to give dowry;

(iii) Amend section 6 of the said Act (dowry to be for the benefit of the wife or her heirs) in order to provide that in the event of the death of any woman, whether due to natural causes or otherwise, whether within 7 years or after 7 years of her marriage, any property to which she is entitled under the section will be transferred to her children or to her parents if she has no children.

(iv) Amend section 4 (1) (a) to provide for jurisdiction of courts.

(v) Empower the Service Provider or the Protection Officer functioning under the Protection of Women from Domestic Violence Act, 2005, under section 7 of the Dowry Prohibition Act, 1961, to lodge a complaint of commission of an offence.

(vi) The words 'soon before her death' occurring in sub-section (1) of section 304B IPC (dowry death) may be replaced by the words 'anytime before her death' and any death occurring in the circumstances mentioned in the sub-section even after 7 years of marriage should be considered as dowry death. The minimum punishment laid down in the sub-section (2) of section 304B IPC should be raised from 7 years to 10 years and death may be prescribed as the maximum penalty alternate to the existing penalty of imprisonment for life.

Chairman of Punjab Social Welfare Board

2934. SHRI TARLOCHAN SINGH: Will the Minister of WOMEN AND CHILD DEVELOPMENT be pleased to state:

(a) who is Chairman of Punjab Social Welfare Board and when she was appointed alongwith the duration of the term of the aid post;

(b) whether it is a fact that Government is continuing her even after the expiry of the term, if so, the reasons therefor;

(c) whether the Punjab Government has sent the panel of names for the new appointment and if so, what action has been taken thereon; and

(d) whether Government has changed its policy where in the State Government has to give the panel of names and selection has to be made by the Chairman, National Social Welfare Board?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF WOMEN AND CHILD DEVELOPMENT (SHRIMATI RENUKA CHOWDHURY): (a) and (b) Smt. Ratna is the Chairperson of Punjab State Social Welfare Board. Her appointment as Chairperson of the State Social Welfare Board for two years from the date of assuming charge *i.e.* 29.9.2004 was notified by the State Government which through a revised notification issued by the State Government extended her tenure from two to three years. The proposal for the reconstitution of the Punjab State Social Welfare Board was not received from the State Government even after the end of the term of the State Board on 28.9.2007. Therefore, following Rule 3(v) of the Rules Governing Composition and Functions of the State Boards, the term of Smt. Ratna as Chairperson of the State Board was extended on 3.10.2007 until

further orders as an interim measure in order to ensure smooth functioning of the Punjab State Social Welfare Board.

(c) The State Government had on 5.11.2007 forwarded to CSWB a panel of three names for selecting a Chairperson of Punjab Social Welfare Board which is under consideration.

(d) No, Sir.

Care of children in need

2935. SHRIMATI MOHSINA KIDWAI: Will the Minister of WOMEN AND CHILD DEVELOPMENT be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government is aware of observations made by UNICEF's representative during February, 2008 that lakhs of children are in need of care but our Children Welfare Committees are able to deal with only a few thousands;

(b) if so, by when Government is going to create requisite infrastructure to fill up the widening gap in child-care; and

(c) whether the abandoned newly-born kids either in hospitals or other similar places getting immediate attention through Government agencies or NGOs?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF WOMEN AND CHILD DEVELOPMENT (SHRIMATI RENUKA CHOWDHURY): (a) and (b) No, Sir. However, Union Government has recently amended the Juvenile Justice (Care and Protection of Children) Act, 2000 and the Juvenile Justice (Care and Protection of Children) Amendment Act, 2006 provides for:

(i) Constitution of one or more Child Welfare Committee for each district;

(ii) Registration of all institutions under the Act, whether State Government run or those run by voluntary organization for children in need of care and protection;

(iii) Review the pendency of cases of the committee at every six months by State Govemments/UT Administrations and direct the committee to increase the frequency of its sittings or may constitute additional committees;

(iv) Recognition of one or more of its institutions or voluntary organizations in each district as specialized adoption agencies for placement of orphan, abandoned or surrendered children for adoption;

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(v) Constitution of Child Protection Unit for the State and such Unit for every district to take up matters relating to children in need of care and protection and juvenile in conflict with law.

The Ministry of Women and Child Development has formulated a new centrally sponsored scheme namely 'Integrated Child Protection Scheme (ICPS)' for implementation during the Eleventh Plan period under which there are provisions for creating requisite infrastructures to provide a safe and secure environment for overall development of the children in the country who are in need for care and protection and children in conflict with law.

(c) Ministry of Women and Child Development is implementing a scheme namely 'Scheme of Assistance to Homes (Shishu Greh) for Children to Promote In-country Adoption under which financial assistance are provided to the Non-Governmental Organisations and State